estate cattle was an old privilege going back many years and that it was a great encouragement to labour to settle down and make homes in Peermade. The trouble was that cattle were necessary on estates for several reasons and they belonged to their Kanganies and coolies and not to the proprietors, so that, if the present rules were to stand, they would all have to pay the grazing tax, which would be a distinct hardship to them, small as it might seem, and would cause dissatisfaction amongst their labour. The coolies, being family people, had to keep cows to supply their children with milk so that on an estate of 600 acres, 200 or 300 cattle (cows and calves) might be required for that purpose. Again, bulls had to be kept on estates for carting purposes connected with the motor lorries of Mundakayam, there being no outside cartmen in Peermade as in Kottayam for instance, and if they did not make their own carting arrangements they should be cut off entirely from communication with Mundakayam. Those cart bulls were also owned by their labour and should surely be entitled to free grazing. Some 30 or 40 carts were required per estate for that purpose, so that the old free allowance of 500 head of cattle for all purposes for each estate was but a reasonable one. The extra revenue to be derived from that source was insignificant. Its collection would only lead to friction between forest rangers and the coolies, whose cattle were liable to be impounded whenever they strayed from an estate to Government grass land. The Member, therefore, requested that they might be allowed to revert to the old grazing rules, by which 500 head of cattle were allowed free grazing, the right being transferable from one estate to another and not being limited to cattle owned by the proprietors. Of course, if Tamil Kanganies and coolies who had resided 20 or 30 years on the estates could be considered "Travancoreans," as they surely should be after such long residence, then the grievance of the proprietors would be met, as they would be exempt from the tax as being "Travancoreans".

*Dewan's reply.*—A report has been already received on the subject from the Conservator of Forests. A further report will be called for from him on the Member's representation and the question again considered on receipt of that report.

**23. Exclusion of the Cardamom Hills from the jurisdiction of the Forest Department.**

*Mr. Sanyasi Mallayan Chetti* (Member, Devicolam taluk) said that, in pursuance of the orders of Government, the cardamom growing areas had been separated from the Forest areas in the Cardamom Hills Reserve. But the former area had not so far been formally transferred to the jurisdiction of the Revenue Department. He understood that it had been suggested that, even in regard to that area, the jurisdiction should continue to vest in the Forest Department as there were some tree-growths here and there in that area. The area did not as a fact contain much valuable tree-growth. The Member, therefore, requested that the cardamom growing area, if not the entire Cardamom Hills Reserve, be disafforested and transferred to the jurisdiction and control of the Revenue Department and all interference of the Forest Department in so far as that area was concerned completely stopped. In regard to the removal of timber from patta lands, the owners of cardamom lands under the old rules were granted free passes, while the new cultivators were required to pay seigniorage rates. That was hard because, while the old cultivators had paid a *tharavila* of only Rs. 10 per acre, the new cultivators had paid at the rate of Rs. 25 per acre. There was, therefore, no justification for the distinction and he prayed that it be wholly removed. A similar distinction was also observed in the matter of permits for the grazing of cattle. That should also be done away with.

*Dewan's reply.*—Noted.

## (3) Salt.

**24. Development of home-salt culture and the creation of a separate Salt Department for the State.**

*Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai* (Member, Agastiswaram taluk) first represented that, of the total quantity of salt required for consumption in the State, about one-half had to



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be annually imported from outside and that the large amount spent on account of transport charges on the imported salt went to swell the pockets of foreign contractors. He then described in detail the condition of the various salt factories in the State and deplored the lack of interest displayed by the officers of the department in increasing the production of indigenous salt. Of the five old *Allams*, the one at Thattarippu *odai* had already been closed for want of water. The Variyur *Allam* was about to be closed owing to the failure of Government to effect the necessary repairs. The remaining *Allams* at Thamarakulam, Rajakkamangalam and Colachel would also become extinct owing to the necessary repairs not being executed and for want of drainage. The owners of the old *Allams* were not given sufficient encouragement in the matter of their *kudivaram* and they were, therefore, indifferent in the manufacture of salt. As regards the new *Allams* the authorities did not insist on the contractors carrying out the stipulated works. An area of 20 acres fit for salt manufacture was lying waste adjoining the Puthalam. Similar areas were also available near the Puthalam Extension factory. The Cape Comorin factory stood in need of brine. Three years ago a channel was ordered to be constructed in respect of the latter for letting in salt water at the cost of the contractors. But nothing further had been done. In regard to Mr. Sankaramurthi Pillay's Factory, it was started on a site approved by Government for salt manufacture. But a very large sum had to be spent on it for want of expert advice, before salt could be successfully manufactured. Mr. Karayalar's factory on which the owner, Mr. Subramonia Karayalar, had incurred very heavy expenditure, was promising and people hoped that, in time, it would be in a position to supply the whole quantity of salt required for consumption in the country; but it was surprising to hear that the authorities had recommended that, in order to connect it with the lake, a bund constructed by the owner at enormous cost should be demolished. The Member stated that there was a large area of *tharisu* lands fit for salt culture but lying waste at Thamarakulam and Rajakkamangalom. They consisted of (1) lands assigned for salt manufacture, but subsequently relinquished, (2) lands assigned for the purpose but not cultivated owing to the indifference of the authorities to enforce the contract and (3) lands encroached upon by the adjoining land-holders. Those lands could be profitably auctioned for the manufacture of salt. All that was required to increase the production of salt was that the owners of the old *Allams* should be encouraged by Government by effecting the necessary repairs and improvements in their *Allams* and by the grant of a legitimate share to them as *kudivaram*. In respect of the new *Allams*, the contractors should be required to carry out all works in pursuance of their agreements. Government should encourage them by affording the requisite facilities for water and by paying them at a uniform rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ *fanams* per *maund* of salt supplied by them. The appointment of a Salt Commissioner to give expert advice and to control and supervise the department was also essential.

The Member objected to the recovery of the transport charges amounting to six annas per *maund* from those who purchased salt direct from the *Allams*, and requested that the price of local salt should be reduced by that amount in their cases.

Lastly, the Member dwelt upon the present defects in the administration of the Salt Department. He objected to the amalgamation of the Salt Department with the Excise Department and urged the need for separating it and placing it under the control of a separate officer who must be an expert in regard to salt culture. He also urged the need for the appointment of a Committee to enquire into the whole question of salt manufacture and the development of salt industry with a view to increase the production of local salt.

*Dewan's reply.*—Noted.

### (4) Excise and Customs.

**25. Need for granting a larger number of sweet toddy licenses.**

*Mr. V. R. Kochunni Vaidyan* (Member, Nominated) represented that, while in the Southern Division no license was required for tapping sweet toddy in Nagercoil, Shencottah, &c., the license was insisted on in North Travancore. As there were

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